

God's Word, and greater activity in his worship, both public and private.

"Fifthly—We would heartily subscribe to the resolutions passed at the Birmingham Convention, which looks to 'a comprehensive and pervasive plan of deputization work,' in which laymen and ministers together shall visit all the congregations in this Synod and lay before them the plans for this work, and the means to be used for the accomplishment of the desired results.

"Sixthly—We would heartily endorse the plan of the Inter-Denominational Laymen's Missionary Movement for holding one of the meetings of the coming National Campaign in Jackson, Miss., February 11-13, 1910, and would urge that every church in the Synod make an effort to secure the largest possible attendance.

"Seventhly—That the next State Conference of our Laymen's Movement be held at Jackson, Miss., in connection with the Inter-Denominational meeting appointed for February 11-13, 1910, and that the canvass of every congregation for this cause, as recommended, be completed before that time, and reports of results of said canvass be made.

"Eighthly—That 'The Modern Crusade,' which is a handsomely bound volume of 320 pages, containing the report in full of all the important addresses, together with the transactions of the Birmingham Convention of our Laymen's Movement, is heartily commended to our people as a most valuable source of information and aid to pastors, laymen and missionary workers, and as a volume of permanent value, containing excellent up-to-date maps, showing location of our mission fields."

Officers for the ensuing year were elected, as follows: R. F. Kimmons, chairman; W. C. Smith, secretary-treasurer.

A resolution of thanks for courtesies extended by the Chautauqua Assembly, the railroad and all who had contributed to the success of the Conference was offered and unanimously adopted by a rising vote.

Adjourned at 3:30 p. m.

W. C. Smith, Secretary.

#### A CHINESE STATESMAN'S FUNERAL.

By Rev. Warren H. Stuart.

One of the greatest pageants this city has ever witnessed took place not long ago, when the remains of the late prime Minister Wang Wen Shao were carried to their resting place on the West Lake. Minister Wang was a native of this city, and had risen from a poor origin to the highest posts in the empire, being a special favorite of the late Empress Dowager, and second only to the late Li Hung Chang. He had been in office continuously for 56 years, and was 76 years old when he died last December, shortly after the Emperor and Empress Dowager. "Successful chef in the kitchen of state" is the description in a poem published in his honor. Small wonder that he was granted an Imperial State funeral, and no expense was spared to make it rival in magnificence the one recently

held for the Emperor in Peking.

Through the good offices of a lady missionary who teaches in the Wang family, the whole missionary community of Hangchow was invited to the house a few days before the funeral, to see the decorations. We were most courteously received, and invited to inspect all the articles on display. A foreign-trained band from Shanghai was discoursing sweet, solemn strains of music. In the rear central hall was placed the casket, covered with richly embroidered red satin, and over it the form of a dragon some ten feet long in rich satin embroidery. The members of the family, clothed in sackcloth stood by the side, and on a table in front were offerings of food, and fruits and lighted candles. Among the decorations were countless silk scrolls sent in from all parts of the empire, extolling the deceased in such sentences as "The perfect man of his generation," "He followed after the Dragon" (referring to his death coming so soon after the Emperor's), "Joy and age alike complete," and the like. There were also on display a coat of mail and helmet, his field-marshal's uniform; two open sedan chairs of satin, and a saddle of red satin richly embroidered, stirrups adorned with cloisonne work and imperial bridle reins; the chairs and saddles being presented when as a mark of special favor he was allowed to ride in the forbidden city or E-Ho park in Peking. Of special interest was an imitation set of gravediggers, implements, flimsily made of wood, but painted yellow and displayed in the procession to show that the funeral was by Imperial sanction.

With all his wealth and wisdom neither this great man nor his family escaped the most abject superstition. Some weeks before the funeral a paper house for his use in the spirit world was burned. This house was modeled after his residence with a counterpart of every article of furniture in it, effigies of his servants and even of the missionary lady who taught in his family! It was large enough for persons to walk about in and had cost hundreds of dollars. Yet all this went up in smoke. Many more hundreds of dollars were burned up in joss paper, or found their way into the pockets of the priests and monks who took part in the funeral.

The cortege started at 6 a. m., winding its way through the principal streets of the city, and then out the North Gate to the lake, by a "lucky" route. At eight different places the procession stopped to receive sacrifices from the officials and commercial and religious organizations. These sacrifices consisted of a pig and a sheep dressed whole, and were presented with many prostrations—the whole thing being equal to canonization by imperial authority.

In front of the procession were several persons scattering imitation paper coins as toll to buy right-of-way in the material world for one who had already passed into the spirit world. Heading the procession then came four immense human figures of paper, called "forerunners," and borne by two men each. Then came

an empty shrine, the imperial grave-digging articles, some forty caskets containing the imperial presents, his saddle-horse, handsomely caparisoned; the satin-covered harness, besides tablets, lanterns, scrolls, plaques, high silk banners and so on too numerous to mention. Programmes indicating the order of march and every item of display had been distributed over the city. From this we learn that there were ninety-eight silk banners presented by the "grateful people" where he had held office, ninety-six Buddhist priests and thirty-six Taoists, soldiers from the governor, city guards and police, to the number of several hundred. Sixteen boys, most beautifully dressed, eight as males and eight as females, representing pages to attend him in the spirit world, walked immediately before the "spirit chest," as the coffin is called. This itself was borne by thirty-two carriers, who had been practicing for three days along the given route chosen, with a frame bearing 13 cwt. of rice on their shoulders. Following the coffin were two sons, four grandsons and six great-grandsons, on foot, and the women of the family in sedans. Images of the eighteen Buddhist sages, together with the four "forerunners" and a number of other articles, were burned on reaching the destination.

The procession was said to be a mile and a half in length, and occupied two hours in passing a given point. In point of outward magnificence it was perhaps the finest display ever made in this city. But the reflecting observer could not but be struck with the barbaric waste, the cringing superstition and Christless mockery of the whole show. But never, perhaps, will such a spectacle be seen in China again. With the growing knowledge of Christianity and regard for the people's rights, crude superstition and wicked waste will give way to the simplicity of a Christian funeral.

Since writing the above paragraphs I have just heard of an interesting sequel to the funeral pageant, which may point the moral, even if it does not adorn the tale. It seems that after the excitement was over, dissension arose as to dividing the family property, and much abuse has been heaped upon the oldest grandson over the prodigal waste for which he was responsible. We hear now that the great mansion has been divided into hostile camps, barred and barricaded against each other, and that the unfrugal manager and heir has had to flee for his life. In his absence the wrath has threatened his two young sons. They were brought to the missionary tutor's home and then sent back, and what the outcome will be no one knows. The lady herself is in a delicate position, with rather too many earthly concerns for one who has already been burned into the spirit world. Certainly that is being "all things to all men" as much as Paul ever was. But if by this or any other means Christ is preached, we do rejoice and will rejoice, for the day is soon coming when a funeral that is Christian will be the rule and not the exception in China.

Hangchow, China.